

REMARKS

In the above-identified Office Action the claims were again rejected as being obvious in view of a combination of the disclosures of the cited Ochi, Chang, and Hamasaki patents. By this response, however, independent Claim 17 has been amended and is believed to be patentable over the cited prior art for the reasons set forth below.

In particular, the present invention as set forth in amended Claim 17 requires a transparent original illuminating device provided with a plurality of urging portions for urging the transparent original against a transparent original plate. The urging portions protrude, less than the depth of field of an imaging lens equipped with a rod lens array disposed above a light emitting surface. In this regard, according to the present invention, by urging the original within the depth of field of the lens, using the urging portions, the transparent original can be placed at the focusing position of the lens even in a compact image reading apparatus that uses a lens having a shallow field depth.

Further, in the present invention, a surface of the urging portion that abuts against the transparent original is larger than a perforation hole of the transparent original, so that the urging portion urges at least parts of areas surrounding successive perforation holes of the transparent original, respectively. With this configuration, the present invention prevents the transparent original from being moved or floated during reading of the original.

Referring now to the cited prior art, the Ochi reference relates to an image reading apparatus that reads a transparent original stored in a transparent original adapter (for example, APS cartridge) detachably connected to the apparatus. In the first embodiment (Fig. 3),

a cartridge chamber 13A, a film space 13B, tension rollers 33, 34, etc. are installed so that a film passing plane 13C above which a film 21 passes during moving of the film 21 maintains a specified distance D from an original placement plane 18 of a platen glass 100 so that the film 21 does not make contact with the platen glass 100. Unlike the present invention, the film is not urged against the original placement plane. In the second embodiment (Fig. 5) of the Ochi reference, two film supporting rollers 75, 75 (for conveying the film) are positioned at a distance in a conveying direction, above the film passing plane 13C. The film passing rollers 75, 76 move in a direction perpendicular to the film plane 13C and are pressed against, or away from, the original placement plane of the platen glass 100. Since the film is pressed against, or away from, the original placement plane by the rollers for conveying the film, the film is not completely urged against the platen glass. Further, this reference is quite silent about "the urging portion for urging the transparent original plate" of the present invention. Also, in the third embodiment (Figs 7 and 9), the film 21 is pressed against a masking plate 85 by a retaining plate 84. The retaining plate 84 is initially positioned above the film passing plane 13C on which a surface of the film 21 is located during film movement. The retaining plate 84 moves downward towards the original placement plate 18 in a direction perpendicular to the film passing plane 13C. However, as shown in Fig. 7, the film is not directly pressed against the original placement plane 18 and thus there is a distance between the film and the original placement plate 18, so that a structure of this embodiment cannot be applied to an image reading apparatus comprising a lens equipped with a rod lens array having a shallow field depth.

Furthermore, the Ochi reference is quite silent as to the features of the present invention as characterized above.

The cited Chang reference discloses that a plane light source 21 has a first side formed with a light permeable face 22, so that a transparency 61 may be smoothly rested on a glass window 15 by the light permeable face 22 of the plane light source 21. In this regard the permeable face 22 presses an entire face of the transparency 61. In the present invention, an image area of the transparent original is not urged, so it is not damaged by the urging force against the transparent original plate. Accordingly, the present invention is clearly different from this reference, and it is noted that neither of the Chang and Hamasaki references overcome the deficiencies of the Ochi patent as a rejecting reference.

For these various reasons, Applicants believe that amended independent Claim 17 as well as each of its dependent claims, are patentably distinct over the cited references, wherefore the issuance of a Notice of Allowance is solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1205.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

/John A. Krause/
John A. Krause
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 24,613

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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